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WS 119H.01: Philosophical Perspectives on Women in the Western Hemisphere

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Spring 2001

Philosophical Perspectives on Women in the Western Hemisphere
Phil.119/WS 119

Dr. Ruth Vanita

Tuesday, Thursday, 9.40-11 a.m. LA 138. 3 credits

Grader: Dawn Walsh

Office: Liberal Arts 146-A. Office Phone: 243-4894.

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 11a.m. -12 noon, and by appointment

Texts

1. Sappho, Poems
2. Euripides, Medea
3. Christine de Pizan The Book of the City of Ladies
4. Henrik Ibsen, A Doll's House
5. Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
6. Jeannette Winterson, Written on the Body
7. Photocopied Readings (available from Dawn Walsh in WS)

Requirements

Students are required to

- (a) attend classes regularly. Excessive unexplained absences (more than two) will result in a zero for attendance and class participation;
- (b) keep up with the assigned reading, bring the text to class, participate in class discussions, and take weekly quizzes;
- (c) write a paper (4-5 pages double-spaced typed). Topics for papers must be selected from those given by me.
- (d) Hand in a one-page abstract of the paper, and discuss it with me during office hours.

Grades:

The paper will be worth 25 percent, class attendance and participation 25 percent, and the quizzes 50 percent.

If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, that will make it difficult for you to complete the work as I have outlined it, please notify me in the first week of class.

Reading Schedule

This schedule is tentative. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with any changes.

January 30 Introduction

February 1 Sappho, Poems.

February 6 Sappho, Poems continued, and extract from Plato, Symposium.

February 8 Euripides, Medea.

February 13 Discussion on film "Being John Malkovich," led by Dawn Walsh. The film will be shown some time before this class.

February 15 Medea continued, and extract from the Book of Genesis.

February 20 Extracts from Judith, Susannah, Ecclesiasticus, Luke, and John.

February 22 The Book of the City of Ladies Part 1, chapters 1-19.

February 27 The Book of the City of Ladies Part 1, chapters 27 to 48; Part 2, chapters 13, 25, 30.

February 28 Lecture by Monica Bachmann on sex and gender categorization 12noon-1 p.m. Extra credit will be given for attending this lecture.

March 1 The Book of the City of Ladies Part 2, chapters 36, 44, 47, 48, 49, 53, 56.

March 6 The Book of the City of Ladies Part 3, chapters 1, 2, 12, 17, 19; extract from Ariosto, Orlando Furioso.

March 8 Selections from History of Woman Suffrage.

March 13 John Ruskin, "Of Queens' Gardens."

March 15 Alice in Wonderland, chapters 1-6.

March 19-23 Spring Break

March 27 Alice in Wonderland, 7-12.

March 29 Henrik Ibsen, A Doll's House Acts 1 and 2.

April 3 A Doll's House Act 3.

April 5 Virginia Woolf, "Professions for Women"; Freud, "On the Sexual Enlightenment of Children"; Margaret Sanger, "My Fight for Birth Control."

April 10 Simone de Beauvoir, extract from The Second Sex.

April 12 Monique Wittig, "The Mark of Gender."

April 17 Ann Oakley, "Sexuality"; Kinsey's Seven-Point Scale of Sexual Identity.

April 19 Sheila Jeffreys, "Women's Friendships and Lesbianism"; Martin Duberman, "Writhing Bedfellows"; Andrew Sullivan, extract from Virtually Normal.

April 24 Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender"; Florence Dillon, "Tell Grandma I'm a Boy."

April 26 Written on the Body.

May 1 Written on the Body.

May 3 Written on the Body.

May 8 Conclusion Paper due in class.